



Town of Groton, Connecticut

45 Fort Hill Road
Groton, CT 06340-4394
Town Clerk (860)441-6640
Town Manager
(860)441-6630

Meeting Minutes

Town Council

Mayor Harry A. Watson, Councilors Peter J. Bartinik, Jr., Heather Sherman Bond, Catherine Kolnaski, Frank O'Beirne, Jr., Rita M. Schmidt, John F. Scott, Paulann H. Sheets, and James L. Streeter.

Tuesday, September 18, 2007

7:30 PM

Town Hall Annex - Community Room 1

REGULAR MEETING

I. ROLL CALL

Mayor Watson called the meeting to order at 7:30 p.m.

Also present were Town Manager Mark Oefinger, Assistant to the Town Manager Lee Vincent, Town Clerk Barbara Tarbox, and Office Assistant Elga Concepcion.

Members Present: Mayor Watson, Councilor Bond, Councilor Kolnaski, Councilor O'Beirne, Jr., Councilor Schmidt, Councilor Scott and Councilor Streeter

Members Absent: Councilor Bartinik, Jr. and Councilor Sheets

II. SALUTE TO THE FLAG

The Salute to the Flag was led by Steve Garmon.

III. RECOGNITION, AWARDS & MEMORIALS

2007-0201 Proclamation Recognizing Citizenship Day

Read

The Proclamation was read by Mayor Watson.

2007-0215 Proclamation Recognizing Senior Center Week

Read

The Proclamation was read by Councilor Kolnaski.

Councilor Kolnaski thanked Town Clerk Tarbox for her work with Citizenship Day.

IV. CITIZENS' PETITIONS, COMMENTS AND CONCERNS

Mary Kelly, 40 Plant Street, President of the Groton Animal Foundation (GAF), is dismayed that the Town is not accepting the services of volunteers due to the lack of liability insurance. She suggested that Councilors consider that remaining funds left in the animal facility's yearly budget be allocated toward insurance costs. Ms. Kelly reiterated that GAF would be willing to contribute toward these costs.

Responding to Councilor Scott's request for clarification, Ms. Kelly stated that she is uncertain of the insurance coverage requirements for volunteers working at the Animal Control Facility.

Responding to Ms. Kelly's concerns regarding insurance, Town Manager Oefinger will speak with Police Chief Kelly Fogg regarding this matter.

Steve Garmon, 96 Corey Road, discussed the shortage of police officers and inadequate funds to perform certain traffic duties. He reviewed the traffic violations which occur on Corey Road and Ring Drive. Mr. Garmon requested that the Town Council provide the necessary resources for the Police Department to conduct a "No Mercy Week" on traffic violations.

Wendy Eckholm, Benham Road, read portions of a newspaper article which reported that Norwich officials will move ahead with plans to renovate its existing animal facility in Mohegan Park. She

stated that there are residents who are not aware of the fact that the concept of a regional animal facility no longer exists.

V. RESPONSES TO CITIZENS' PETITIONS, COMMENTS AND CONCERNS

Responding to Mr. Garmon's comments, the Town Manager confirmed that the traffic violations in that area are discussed at Traffic Authority meetings.

Councilor Streeter requested that Fitch Senior and Grasso Southeastern Technical High Schools be notified of concentrated efforts for traffic enforcement on the surrounding streets.

Responding to Councilor Schmidt, Mr. Oefinger confirmed that there are no speed bumps in that neighborhood.

VI. CONSENT CALENDAR

a. Approval of Minutes

2007-0216 Approval of Minutes (Town Council)

RESOLUTION ACCEPTING TOWN COUNCIL MINUTES

RESOLVED, that the minutes of the Town Council meeting of September 4, 2007 are hereby accepted and approved.

This Matter was Adopted on the Consent Calendar.

b. Deletions from the Town Council Referral List

2006-0239 Animal Shelter

This Matter was Deleted from Referral List - No further action on the Consent Calendar.

2007-0022 Senior Center Expansion

This Matter was Deleted from Referral List - No further action on the Consent Calendar.

2007-0211 Panhandling Ordinance

Removed from Consent Calendar Deletion List

2007-0214 Proposed Aquarion Rate Increase

This Matter was Deleted from Referral List - No further action on the Consent Calendar.

2007-0191 Reuse of Groton Heights School

This Matter was Deleted from Referral List - Action to be taken on the Consent Calendar.

2007-0221 Appointment of Louise Page to Board of Assessment Appeals

This Matter was Deleted from Referral List - Action to be taken on the Consent Calendar.

2007-0222 Reappointment of David Scott to the Inland Wetlands Agency

This Matter was Deleted from Referral List - Action to be taken on the Consent Calendar.

2007-0223 Reappointment of Robert Ashworth to the Inland Wetlands Agency

This Matter was Deleted from Referral List - Action to be taken on the Consent Calendar.

2007-0224 Appointment of Helen Rush Giordano to Jabez Smith House Committee

This Matter was Deleted from Referral List - Action to be taken on the Consent Calendar.

2007-0225 Reappointment of Members of the Jabez Smith House Committee

This Matter was Deleted from Referral List - Action to be taken on the Consent Calendar.

c. Special Trust Fund Contributions

2007-0208 Special Trust Fund Contributions

RESOLUTION ACCEPTING CONTRIBUTIONS TO SPECIAL TRUST FUNDS

Enza Vignato - \$20.00 - Parks and Recreation Revolving
Michelle Pasqualini - \$20.00 - Parks and Recreation Revolving
Kimberly Kerst - \$15.00 - Parks and Recreation Revolving
Peggy Pearse - \$10.00 - Parks and Recreation Revolving
Jeffrey and Mary Labasi - \$20.00 - Parks and Recreation Revolving
Mark and John Schafer - \$20.00 - Parks and Recreation Revolving
Kristin and Robert Fairbank - \$40.00 - Parks and Recreation Revolving
Lloyd and Kelly Morales - \$50.00 - Parks and Recreation Revolving
Bruce and Kathleen Flax - \$20.00 - Parks and Recreation Revolving
Peter and Lori Bartnik - \$25.00 - Parks and Recreation Revolving
Groton Parks Foundation - \$38,419.63 - Parks and Recreation Revolving
Various Donations - \$850.00 - Groton Utilities Energy Assistance Program
Sharon Holloy - \$100.00 - Parks and Recreation Revolving
Maureen LaMontagne - \$100.00 - Parks and Recreation Revolving
Susan and David Eldridge - \$100.00 - Parks and Recreation Revolving
Various Donations - \$501.54 - Groton Utilities Energy Assistance Program (GAP)

This Matter was Adopted on the Consent Calendar.

d. Tax Refund

2007-0217

Tax Refund

RESOLUTION APPROVING TAX REFUND

WHEREAS, the following, for the reason indicated, has overpaid taxes in the amount specified, and

WHEREAS, the Tax Collector has recommended the amount be refunded, be it

RESOLVED, that the tax refund indicated below is hereby approved.

G E Burlington - \$4,725.16 - Excess payment

G E Burlington - \$86.88 - Excess Payment

This Matter was Adopted on the Consent Calendar.

Passed The Consent Calendar

A motion was made by Councilor Kolnaski, seconded by Councilor Schmidt, to adopt the Consent Calendar, including all the preceding items marked as having been adopted on the Consent Calendar.

The motion carried unanimously

Upon the request of Councilor Scott and with the consensus of the Council, the Panhandling Ordinance referral will not be deleted so that other ways of addressing this issue may be researched.

VII. COMMUNICATION REPORTS (Other than Committee Reports)

a. Town Councilors

The majority of Councilors attended Citizenship Day on September 17 and thanked the Town Clerk for a job well done.

Councilor Scott attended the Phase II School Design Committee meeting on September 13 and received phone calls regarding the Panhandling Ordinance.

Mayor Watson attend a school technology meeting on September 6.

Councilor Kolnaski attended a Permanent School Building Committee meeting on September 6. She attended two Phase II School Design Committee meetings as well as Citizenship Recognition Committee, and Senior Citizen Club meetings. Councilor Kolnaski attended the Groton Library

30 Year Celebration on September 14.

b. Representative Town Meeting

Town Clerk Barbara Tarbox noted that the RTM will meet on October 10. There was a brief discussion regarding the letter which the RTM approved to be sent to Stonington concerning the funding of Mystic and Noank Library.

c. Clerk of the Council

Town Clerk Tarbox thanked the committee and volunteers who assisted her with Citizenship Day preparations.

d. Town Manager

Town Manager Mark Oefinger reminded viewers that the Permanent School Building Committee and Groton Business Association will be meeting on September 20. He stated that there will be three bond rating agency sessions on September 26; he will provide the official statement to the Council after the sessions.

Mr. Oefinger reminded viewers that there will be a community volunteer event at the Tercentennial Playground on August 18. He stated that the Town's Surplus Sale is scheduled for September 15. The Town Manager reviewed the meeting dates of the Citizens' Tax and School Design Committees.

Assistant to the Town Manager Lee Vincent provided an update from the Shellfish Task Force meeting on September 17.

e. Town Attorney

No report.

VIII. COMMITTEE REPORTS

a. Community & Cultural Development - Chairman O'Beirne

No meeting; no report.

b. Economic Development - Chairman Bond

No meeting; no report.

c. Education/Health & Social Services - Chairman Kolnaski

No meeting; no report.

d. Environment & Recreation - Chairman Sheets

No meeting; no report.

e. Finance - Chairman Schmidt

No meeting; no report.

f. Personnel/Appointments/Rules - Chairman Scott

Councilor Scott reviewed the minutes of the meeting held on September 11 which are on file in the Town Clerk's office.

g. Public Safety - Chairman Streeter

No meeting; no report.

h. Public Works - Chairman Bartinik

No meeting; no report.

i. Committee of the Whole - Mayor Watson

There was a Committee of the Whole meeting on September 11 and a special Committee of the Whole meeting on September 14. The items on tonight's agenda are a result of those meetings.

IX. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

None.

X. NEW BUSINESS

2007-0191 Reuse of Groton Heights School

RESOLUTION ESTABLISHING GROTON HEIGHTS SCHOOL REUSE TASK FORCE

WHEREAS, prior to the beginning of this school year the Groton Board of Education decided that Groton Heights School Facility was no longer needed for school purposes and the building was turned over to the Town, and

WHEREAS, the Town has received a number of inquiries concerning the reuse of this building, and

WHEREAS, Groton Heights is located within a residential area and is adjacent to two institutional uses including the Bill Memorial Library and Fort Griswold, and

WHEREAS, it is the desire of the Town Council to make sure that the reuse of this building is in keeping with the surrounding neighborhood, community needs, and in the best interest of the entire community, now therefore be it

RESOLVED, that the Town Council wishes the Mayor to appoint a Groton Heights School Reuse Task Force including:

1. A representative from the Town Council.
2. A representative from the City Council.
3. A representative from the RTM.
4. A representative from the Board of Education.
5. A representative from the City Planning and Zoning Commission.
6. A representative from the Bill Memorial Library
7. A representative representing the interests of Fort Griswold.
8. Two representatives from the surrounding neighborhood.
9. A representative from the community at large.

and be it further,

RESOLVED, that a Technical Advisory Board be established to assist with the necessary technical advice and assistance consisting of Town/City staff and others as necessary, and be it further

RESOLVED, that the tasks of the Reuse Task Force are:

1. To determine the statutory and other limitations that are placed on the Groton Heights property.
2. Inventory community needs that could be accommodated at Groton Heights.
3. Make a recommendation as to whether or not the property should be permanently disposed of as surplus and/or whether or not the building should be reused to meet other public needs or if the space should be leased to an outside concern.
4. If the property is to be disposed of, to recommend a plan to solicit reuse proposals for Town Council review and action.

A motion was made by Councilor Bond, seconded by Councilor Kolnaski, that this matter be Adopted.

The motion carried unanimously

2007-0221 Appointment of Louise Page to Board of Assessment Appeals

RESOLUTION APPOINTING LOUISE PAGE AS AN ALTERNATE MEMBER TO THE BOARD OF ASSESSMENT APPEALS

RESOLVED, that Louise K. Page, 58 Warner Street, is appointed as an alternate member of the Board of Assessment Appeals for a term ending 12/31/08.

A motion was made by Councilor Scott, seconded by Councilor Streeter, that this matter be Adopted.

The motion carried unanimously

2007-0222 Reappointment of David Scott to the Inland Wetlands Agency

REAPPOINTMENT OF DAVID SCOTT TO THE INLAND WETLANDS AGENCY

RESOLVED, that David R.Scott, 191 Pequot Avenue, Mystic is hereby reappointed to the Inland Wetlands Agency for a term expiring 12/31/08.

A motion was made by Councilor Scott, seconded by Councilor Streeter, that this matter be Adopted.

The motion carried unanimously

2007-0223 Reappointment of Robert Ashworth to the Inland Wetlands Agency

REAPPOINTMENT OF ROBERT ASHWORTH AS AN ALTERNATE MEMBER OF THE INLAND WETLANDS AGENCY

RESOLVED, that Robert L. Ashworth, 39 Whitney Road, Mystic, is hereby appointed as an alternate to the Inland Wetlands Agency for a term expiring 12/31/08.

A motion was made by Councilor Scott, seconded by Councilor Streeter, that this matter be Adopted.

The motion carried unanimously

2007-0224 Appointment of Helen Rush Giordano to Jabez Smith House Committee

RESOLUTION OF CONSENT TO THE APPOINTMENT OF HELEN RUSH GIORDANO TO THE JABEZ SMITH HOUSE COMMITTEE

WHEREAS, a Town Council resolution of September 20, 1994, provided that the Town Manager may appoint members of the Jabez Smith House Committee with the consent of the Town Council, and

WHEREAS, the Town Manager desires to appoint Helen Rush Giordano, 10 Plymouth Court, to a term ending 9/7/08, now therefore be it

RESOLVED, that the Town Council hereby consents to the appointment of Helen Rush Giordano to the Jabez Smith House Committee for a term ending 9/7/08.

A motion was made by Councilor Scott, seconded by Councilor Streeter, that this matter be Adopted.

The motion carried unanimously

2007-0225 Reappointment of Members of the Jabez Smith House Committee

RESOLUTION REAPPOINTING MEMBERS TO THE JABEZ SMITH HOUSE COMMITTEE

RESOLVED, that the following members are hereby reappointed to the Jabez Smith House Committee, for terms expiring as noted:

Lorraine Santangelo, 331 Tyler Avenue - 9/7/10

Jeffery T. Blevens, 17 Ashby Street, Mystic - 9/7/10

Richard D. Dixon, 15 Route 27, Old Mystic - 9/7/10

Andrew W. German, 42 West Mystic Avenue, Mystic - 9/7/08

John C. McGee, 95 Sound Breeze Avenue, Groton Long Point - 9/7/10

Arlene M. Stamm, 20 Smith Street, Noank - 9/7/10

A motion was made by Councilor Scott, seconded by Councilor Schmidt, that this matter be Adopted.

The motion carried unanimously

XI. OTHER BUSINESS

Upon the request of Councilor Streeter, the Town Manager will provide a copy of the correspondence sent to State officials requesting the release of the bonding for the Fort Griswold Monument.

XII. ADJOURNMENT

A motion was made by Councilor Kolnaski, seconded by Councilor Scott, to adjourn the meeting at 8:20 p.m.

*The motion carried unanimously.
Attest:*

Barbara Tarbox, Town Clerk

*Elga Concepcion
Office Assistant*